



Northeastern Small Vessel Security Summit

"...Managing the Risk"

Homeland Security Institute
Quick Look Report
Northeastern Small Vessel Security Summit
Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts
June 7, 2008

The Northeastern Small Vessel Security Summit was held at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts, on Saturday, June 7, 2008.

Summit co-host RADM Timothy Sullivan, Commander, Coast Guard First District, outlined the nature of threats associated with small vessels and Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) commitment to deal with them. He pointed out that most safety procedures and many operations fit into the security framework and provided updates on several important changes and initiatives pertaining to safety. He emphasized utility of vessel tracking systems for mariner use, noted that America's Waterway Watch is a major component of the USCG strategy and that emerging energy initiatives will cause new requirements for security concerns and monitoring.

Keynote speaker, RADM Brian Salerno, Coast Guard Assistant Commandant for Safety, Security and Stewardship, provided background on the extension of maritime security policy to small vessels and the need for public interaction and support in getting it right. He noted four types of small vessel use threats: Waterborne Improvised Explosive Devices (WBIEDs), weapons smuggling (possible WMD); people smuggling (terrorist); and being used as platforms for stand-off attack. He spoke about the idea of risk-based approaches to setting priorities and a layered maritime domain defense. He spoke to the importance of cooperation among all interested parties, across all industry, government and private sectors. RADM Salerno provided examples of measures taken with larger vessels pertaining to visibility of international movements (notice of arrival, forward screening abroad, Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) and marine patrols) and how they were effective in setting a layered, mandatory, defense program for large vessels. He spoke to the importance of the Transportation Workers Identification Card (TWIC) for port operations credentialing, some specific security plans and information sharing arrangements. He concluded by indicating that the need was now to figure out appropriate ways to get similar things in place and to pinpoint what will and won't work from different points of view in the small vessel community, before being needed due to a small vessel security incident in the United States.

The America's Waterway Watch Program was presented by LT John Taylor, Program Manager from Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C. He described the goals of the program, its evolution, and its responsiveness to recommendations made by stakeholders at prior Summit meetings.



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Mr. Robert Gauvin, Technical Advisor for the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Vessel Activities, led off and moderated a panel of distinguish representatives of small vessel stakeholders. Mr. Gauvin substituted at the last minute for Major John Fetterman, Maine Department of Marine Resources. The other panel members were: Captain Elizabeth Gedney, Director of Safety, Security and Risk Management for the Passenger Vessel Association; Mr. Brad Glas, Executive Director, National Party Boat Owners Alliance; Mr. Richard Miner, Operations Officer, Seaboats Inc.; and Ms. Angela Sanfilippo, President, Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association and Acting Executive Committee Director of the Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership.

All panelists described many opportunities for effective cooperation by the small vessel community, noting the patriotism, self-interest, large numbers, breadth of expertise, and wide range of views by people on the water. Panelists discussed the very serious issues of their industry's poor economic conditions due to the uncontrolled upturn in fuel-operating cost, employee-personnel credentialing and the limits of personal spending by the public for recreation and transportation by small vessels. Industry speakers pointed out that costs associated with regulation and fuel prices are the most serious threats they face, and that any new economic burden will sharply reduce their numbers and their ability to participate in new security programs. Examples of costly impacts included duplicative licensing, costly credentialing requirements with unwieldy or poorly operating registration processes, and measures that did not match actual threats in various segments of the very diverse small vessel community. Specific examples were offered about better ways to set priorities based on risk assessment.

Panelists also pointed out the need for more effective education programs, particularly for recreational boaters and the "waterfront public". They observed that local interactions directly between the public and officials, plus the social motivation of communities are critical elements of building and sustaining awareness and incentives to act. It was noted that there are many opportunities to educate young people and to link training about vessel operation safety to broader issues of security.

Finally, many panelists noted that safety and security solutions are intrinsically related and that they must be balanced in approaching issues of security. Several panelists tied together examples of ways that measures affect each, and emphasized the desirability of "dual use" approaches to regulation and operations. They placed the discussion into the context of the limited resources that boaters have at their disposal. Additionally, there was interest expressed in bringing together the various safety and security groups as DHS moves forward with its plans.

Mr. Gauvin described the newly released DHS National Small Vessel Security Strategy and explained the overall program in small vessel security as it has evolved in the Department. He outlined, in particular, the impact of Summit participants in key aspects of the Strategy and emerging plans for implementation. He described the next steps and invited participants to remain involved as efforts are made towards building and



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sustaining an effective partnership. Mr. Gauvin spoke about the major goals expressed in the Strategy and pointed out that it outlined the need for flexible regional approaches, coherent plans with a layered coordination of public, private and industry involvement, the intent to leveraging technology to detect, determine intent and when necessary interdict, and to enhance education and communications with all small vessel stakeholders to ensure they are part of the solution.

Scenario based discussion exercises, facilitated by the Homeland Security Institute’s Mr. George Murphy, dealt with ways to detect, deter or prevent terrorist attacks at two major ports within the U.S. Northeastern region. The tabletop exercises engaged the audience to explore a broad range of elements in the richly layered security strategy that has been deployed and that can evolve through initiatives such as the small vessel security strategy. Participants brought their experience and ideas into the discussions and shared suggestions about what they believed were required and workable from practical, operational and economic perspectives. The discussions drove home the complexity of the overall problem and the utility of a risk based and flexible layered strategy of security in depth.

In a final session, participants offered ideas for future events. Specific suggestions were to have the right stakeholders as speakers, to consider creative grant programs for small vessel operator education. Also relating to education, it was recommended that the security standards be added as required parts of safety certification programs, and that DHS offer standards for such programs to guide local initiative in developing operator proficiency relevant programs.
